

## **Morgenthaler/Canvas Hires Rip Empson from TechCrunch**

*By Timothy Hay | Menlo Park, Calif.*

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Venture firm Morgenthaler has hired TechCrunch journalist Rip Empson as a senior associate, tasking the one-time reporter with marketing the firm's information-technology portfolio companies and sourcing new deals--a "blended" role that is a first on Sand Hill Road, the firm said.

Mr. Empson has been with the firm for about two weeks. Morgenthaler--whose information-technology practice has re-branded, and now goes by the name Canvas Venure Fund--announced the hire via a post on social media.

Mr. Empson will work for both Morgenthaler and Canvas.

At TechCrunch, Mr. Empson was known for covering emerging information-technology companies in their earliest days, something that makes him qualified for the unusual dual-role at the firm, Partner Rebecca Lynn said.

"He knows everybody," Ms. Lynn said. "I planted a seed in his brain about a year ago, when I realized that he really, really knows startups. I wanted to tap into that. It took a year, and now he's here."

Ching Wu, head of marketing and investor relations for Morgenthaler and Canvas, said Mr. Empson will do marketing work on behalf of IT companies in the Morgenthaler portfolio, including medical-network Doximity Inc., application-integration technology maker MuleSoft Inc., collaboration-software company Scrybe Corp., known as Convo, and social fundraising platform maker Fundly Inc.

"He'll be pitching reporters, and since he has been a reporter, he will know what to do," Ms. Wu said. "Our portfolio companies definitely see the value. Young entrepreneurs sometimes can't get attention, because they don't know how to pitch reporters."

Though Mr. Empson is not the first tech journalist to be snapped up by Sand Hill Road--last year, Andreessen Horowitz hired Wired magazine editor Michael Copeland--the dual role is a first, Ms. Lynn said.

Last year, three Morgenthaler partners--Ms. Lynn, Gary Little and Gary Morgenthaler--said that they had [raised a \\$175 million investment vehicle](#) under the name Canvas Venture Fund. The fund is managed by Morgenthaler Technology Investment Co., a newly formed management company.

The firm started to raise dedicated funds for investing in specific areas last year, the firm told VentureWire. It used to raise hybrid funds from which all three investing teams drew capital. The three teams included IT, life sciences and middle-market buyouts.

While the firm's information-technology investors invest under the name Canvas Venture Fund, its life sciences investors are working alongside health investors from Advanced Technology Ventures with a new fund called Lightstone Ventures, [investors have told VentureWire](#).

<http://www.morgenthaler.com/>

<http://www.canvas.vc/>